

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2895

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 5013

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UNGA KN

SUBJ: KOREA: FURTHER TO WALDHEIM-KISSINGER LETTER

REF: USUN 4840

1. THOMAS OF UKUN WITH AMB RICHARD'S APPROVAL (PLEASE PROTECT BOTH FULLY) PROVIDED POLCOUNS OCT 14 WITH FOLLOWING TEXT OF CONFIDENTIAL MESSAGE RICHARD HAD JUST SENT TO FCO.

17953

1. WHEN I CALLED TODAY ON WALDHEIM TO DISCUSS OTHER BUSINESS, HE RAISED WITH ME THE SUBJECT OF KOREA. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS TELLING ME ON A STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL BASIS. HE HAS RECENTLY HAD THREE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE NORTH KOREANS, THE MOST RECENT HAVING TAKEN PLACE YESTERDAY WITH THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER. WALDHEIM SAID THAT THE NORTH KOREANS HAD IT IN MIND TO LET THE AMERICANS KNOW THAT THEY WANTED TO HAVE AN INITIAL CONTACT WITH THEM ON A CONFIDENTIAL AND INFORMAL BASIS, WITHOUT PUBLICITY, IN ORDER TO DISCUSS PROCEDURES FOR GETTING OUT OF THE DILEMMA ON THE KOREAN QUESTION WHICH THEY NOW FACED. THEY UNDERSTOOD, WALDHEIM SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT FIND IT ACCEPTABLE TO LEAVE THE SOUTH KOREANS COMPLETELY OUT OF THE PICTURE. BUT THEY NEVERTHELESS THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO ENTER INTO INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH THE UNITED STATES IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WALDHEIM SAID THAT THE NORTH KOREANS HAD GIVEN HIM THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY MIGHT BE
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INTERESTED IN THE KIND OF PROCEDURE FOR CONTACT WHICH HAD

BEEN ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

2. WALDHEIM SAID THAT THE NORTH KOREAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER HAD YESTERDAY ADDED A NEW ELEMENT. HE HAD PROPOSED PARALLEL TALKS BETWEEN:

- (A) NORTH KOREA AND THE UNITED STATES, AND
- (B) NORTH KOREA AND SOUTH KOREA.

THE NORTH KOREANS RECOGNIZED, ACCORDING TO WALDHEIM, THAT THE UNITED STATES MILITARY PRESENCE HAD TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH THE UNITED STATES: BUT THERE WERE OTHER PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE FUTURE OF KOREA WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS THEMSELVES

3. WALDHEIM HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THIS NEW ELEMENT AND BY THE FACT THAT IT WAS THE NORTH KOREANS THEMSELVES WHO HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE IN SPEAKING TO WALDHEIM IN THIS WAY. WALDHEIM FELT THAT THEY HAD WANTED HIM TO PASS ON THEIR VIEWS TO THE AMERICANS. HE HAD THEREFORE DONE SO IN WRITING TO DR KISSINGER THROUGH MR. MOYNIHAN. (HE HAD NOT YET, HOWEVER, HAD TIME TO INFORM THE AMERICANS ABOUT HIS TALK YESTERDAY WITH THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER.) WALDHEIM CONCLUDED THAT THE NORTH KOREANS WANTED TO START SOME KIND OF CONFIDENTIAL NEGOTIATING PROCESS WITH THE UNITED STATES. WALDHEIM SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF SOME FORM OF CONTACT BETWEEN THE AMERICANS AND THE NORTH KOREANS COULD BE ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE KOREAN DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY, WHOSE OUTCOME HE WAS AFRAID MIGHT BE DAMAGING TO US STANDING. WALDHEIM SAID THAT HE WAS TELLING ME ALL THIS NOW BECAUSE OF OUR OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES. I SAID THAT I WOULD REPORT THIS CONVERSATION TO YOU.

4. WALDHEIM ADDED THAT THE JAPANESE WERE WORKING HARD TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE KOREAN PROBLEM. THE IDEA THEY HAD PUT TO HIM WAS TO GET NEGOTIATIONS GOING BETWEEN NORTH KOREA AND THE UNITED STATES, WITH THE SOUTH KOREANS JOINING IN LATER. WALDHEIM HAD MENTIONED THIS IDEA TO THE NORTH KOREANS BUT HAD GOT AN EVASIVE REACTION.

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COMMENT:

5. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UN DEBATE, THE AMERICANS MIGHT FIND THE NORTH KOREANS LESS INTRINSIC IF ANY CONTACT WHICH THEY ESTABLISHED COULD BE MADE BEFORE, RATHER THAN AFTER, THE DEBATE ON THE KOREAN ITEM IN WHICH THE AMERICANS ARE BOUND TO HAVE A ROUGH TIME. BUT THE CONVERSE, AS SEEN FROM

HERE IS THAT IF THE UNITED STATES WERE TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH NORTH KOREA BEFORE THE DEBATE THIS WOULD BE QUITE LIKELY TO LEAK (OR TO BE DELIBERATELY LEAKED BY THE NORTH KOREANS) AND THE WAVERERS WOULD THEN BE EVEN LESS INCLINED TO SUPPORT THE FRIENDLY RESOLUTION.

6. PLEASE REPEAT AS NECESSARY. UNQTE

2. THOMAS TOLD POLCOUNS BRITISH ARE SUSPICIOUS NORTH KOREANS MAY BE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF WALDHEIM. WALDHEIM GAVE RICHARD NO INDICATION THAT HE SUSPECTED NORTH KOREANS MIGHT BE BUILDING A TRAP FOR AMERICANS, WHOSE POSITION ON KOREA COULD BE HURT BY A LEAK. IT SEEMS TO US WALDHEIM'S PURPOSE IN BRIEFING RICHARD MAY HAVE BEEN TO ENCOURAGE BRITISH TO PRESS US TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH NORTH KOREA. THOMAS THOUGHT THAT IF AMERICANS DID NOT RESPOND POSITIVELY KOREANS MIGHT LEAK WORD OF THEIR PROPOSAL AND THIS FACT.
MOYNIHAN

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